

THE
ITALIAN MONK,

34

A PLAY,
IN THREE ACTS;

WRITTEN BY

JAMES BOADEN, Esq;

AND FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre Royal, Haymarket,

ON TUESDAY, AUG. 15, 1797.

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1797.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SCHEDONI,	-	-	<i>Mr. Palmer.</i>
VIVALDI,	-	-	<i>Mr. C. Kemble.</i>
ANSALDO,	-	-	<i>Mr. Aikin.</i>
SPALATRO,	-	-	<i>Mr. R. Palmer.</i>
PAULLO,	-	-	<i>Mr. Sutt.</i>
CARLO,	-	-	<i>Mr. Trueman.</i>
STILETTO,	-	-	<i>Mr. Caulfield.</i>
CORVINO,	-	-	<i>Mr. Waldron, Jun.</i>
PRIEST,	-	-	<i>Mr. Usher.</i>

MARCHIONESS,	-	-	<i>Mrs. Harlowe.</i>
OLIVIA,	-	-	<i>Miss Heard.</i>
ELLENA DE ROSALBA,	-	-	<i>Miss Decamp.</i>
ABRESS,	-	-	<i>Miss Hale.</i>
FIORESCA,	-	-	<i>Mrs. Bland.</i>
GRADISCA,	-	-	<i>Mrs. Booth.</i>
MARGARITONE.			

GUARDS, &c. &c.

CHORUS OF ASSASSINS.

*Messrs. Linton, Brown, Lyons, Aylmer,
Little, Willoughby, Dibble, &c.*

CHORUS OF NUNS.

*Mesds. Andrews, Menage, Butler, Brown,
Benson, Masters, Norton, &c.*

NOTE. For the exquisite Ballad of POOR MARY, the
Author is indebted to the Pen of Mr. COLMAN.

THE ITALIAN MONK.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment ; Views of Ruins.*

VIVALDI and PAULLO enter.

VIVALDI.

COME hither, my good Paullo. I have found thee
Still trusty ever. Thy most zealous service
Hath been attemper'd by a love as steady
As waits on equal fortunes—and thy master
Looks on thee as a friend in whom his thoughts
Find sanctuary, and his wishes aid.

PAULLO.

You over-rate my merits, gracious Sir ; I have
nothing but honesty, and some odd quirks of
humour, which you accept in lieu of abler ser-
vice.

VIVALDI.

Attend me, Paullo. Spare professions. Hear,
And then assist me stedfastly. Some months
Have now elapsed since, at San Carlo, I
Beheld a lady, whose unmatched perfections
Made conquest of my heart. It was at mass ;
And holy was her influence : she inspir'd
A passion sacred as the solemn rites, and pure
As the white vestments of their ministrant.

B

PAULLO.

PAULLO.

Nothing more likely, when the flesh is raised as high as faintly-virtue, it must settle at last upon some daughter of frail Nature.

VIVALDI.

Spare comment, and observe me. Since that time I have, in private, often visited;
And pour'd my soul before her; she receiv'd me
With maiden-modesty, and artless truth,
But high-uplifted sense of honour; firm
Not to accept me, but with the consent
Of both my parents.

PAULLO.

That is contrary to all received procedure—
modern usage makes pardon and consent keep
company.

VIVALDI.

I' the road to Altieri stand the ruins
Of Fort Paluzzi. You have seen, no doubt,
An arch suspended on two rocks; near which,
As often as I visited the lady,
Some thing, of earth or air I doubt, rose darkly,
In form a monk, wrapp'd closely in his cowl,
And bade me dread the road to Altieri.

PAULLO.

Schedoni, on my life.—That meddling priest
has pierc'd your secret, and by these strange
threats seeks to deter you from your purposes.

VIVALDI.

VIVALDI.

That I would know for certain. You, good Paullo,
 Shall soon as dark attend me to Altieri—
 But see, Schedoni comes this way. Retire.
 Some previous founding may not be amiss,
 And his close soul may flame out on suspicion.

[Exit PAULLO.]

Enter SCHEDONI.

SCHEDONI.

Benedicite!—Health and peace be with you.

VIVALDI.

The like to you, most sage and holy father.
 You find me musing on the wrecks of time!
 These faithful portraits of our country's ruins,
 I wonder that my mother has not here
 The ruins of Paluzzi; close at hand,
 They might be drawn with ease.

SCHEDONI.

'Tis so, my son;
 We flight what lies before us; and our fires,
 Those human ruins mould'ring in our vaults,
 Are lessons bound, whose clasps we never open.

VIVALDI.

Father, perhaps you've lately seen Paluzzi,
(With a glance of scrutiny.)

B 2

SCHEDONI.

SCHEDONI.

A striking vestige of antiquity !

VIVALDI.

That arch between two rocks suspended, one
Topp'd by the fortress-towers, the other crown'd
By the tall pine and spreading oak, produces
All that we claim for picture, saving only
The human figure, to give life and action.
Groups of banditti, ready to burst out
On the unguarded traveller ; or some Monk,
In his dark vesture, stealing from the shade,
Like some supernal messenger of evil,
Would work it up in true sublimity.

SCHEDONI.

You paint most richly : and I much admire
The skill, that coupled monks with your banditti.

VIVALDI.

I drew no parallel. Your pardon, father.

SCHEDONI.

There's no offence, (*With a ghastly smile.*)

VIVALDI.

My fancy turn'd on monks
From real occurrences ; for though banditti
Ne'er issued from it, yet I never pass'd
That same Paluzzi, but a monk appear'd,
And fled or faded from my sight so suddenly,

That

That I have thought the shape was spiritual.
But be it what it may, I hope ere long
Better acquaintance; and shall tell him strongly
Such truths, that he shall dare presume no
longer
To affect, as though he did not understand them.

SCHEDONI.

You will do right, if he has injur'd you.

VIVALDI.

I have not said he has—and if you know so,
It is by other means than my expression.

SCHEDONI.

I judg'd it by your eye, and tone of voice.

VIVALDI.

No, if I am injur'd, it is by that fly
And subtle fiend, the secret counsellor,
Who steals into a family to wound
Its peace and honour. 'Tis the base informer,
The asperfer of the innocent—who stands
Convicted in the person now before me.

SCHEDONI.

I will not here affect to miss your meaning.
You think that I have injur'd you—but yet
I will not trust myself to think you mean
Those most opprobrious stains to light on me.

VIVALDI.

VIVALDI.

I mean them on the wretch who injures me:
You best know whether they apply to you.

SCHEDONI.

If you direct them only to your foe,
Whate'er they were, I have nothing to complain of.

VIVALDI.

Of this be sure—he will not long escape me.

SCHEDONI.

(Exit.)

Rash and insulting boy—Go, weave the web,
That shall ensnare thy dotage into ruin.
Hast thou so slightly read time's registers,
To dare the gloomy vengeance of the cloister?
Though I seem wedded to austerity,
The iron scourge my exercise, my day
Frozen by abstinence and hourly prayer,
Yet, underneath this icy outside, glows
As fierce a flame of masterless ambition,
As e'er informed the conquerors of earth,
And wither'd nations in its splendid course.
Thy heart shall feel me, stripling, ere the sun
Break from his brilliant chamber in the east,
And wake thee next to think of thy Rosalba.
Now to the marchioness—If I can work
Her pride to give the girl to my disposal,
Exile or death shall shut her from his arms.

(Exit.)

SCENE—*Fort Paluzzi, as described before.*

Enter VIVALDI, *followed by* PAULLO *with a torch.*

VIVALDI.

Behold Paullo, we are near the spot.

PAULLO.

Yes, Sir. I had a presentiment of it—a certain odd sympathy of the nerves, which the vulgar would call trembling.

VIVALDI.

How! superstitious Paullo!

PAULLO.

Not the least, Sir; but the place itself makes a man rummage among the relics of the nursery; and though I think I could face any thing in the face of day, yet night, and such desolation as Paluzzi, make a child of me.

VIVALDI.

It is about the time now, that I have been cross'd by this strange visitant.

PAULLO.

Did you ever follow it, Sir?

VIVALDI.

O yes—I rush'd down the cavern underneath that arch. But, as I advanced, the faint moonlight could not struggle through the gloom
---the

—the figure vanish'd, and I was compelled to hurry out of the damp for fear of suffocation.

PAULLO.

Well, at all events the torch will allow us to see the course he takes—if, indeed, it is mere monkish flesh and blood.

VIVALDI.

You had better for the present hide the torch in that little cavern on your right hand, and let us watch the projection of the rock, from which he must come to take his stand.

PAULLO.

Hush, don't you see some moving shadow cross the avenue?

VIVALDI.

'Tis the shadow of the fortress turret.

PAULLO.

I beg pardon, Sir; but are you sure you heard a voice—for my fancy would easily fashion a monk: in short, are you sure it was not all moon-shine?

VIVALDI.

Certain. I was walking on Tuesday night this way—and as I now do, casting a curious eye towards the arch, I heard at a distance the solemn murmurs of the mountain; when turning to proceed on my walk, I saw it.

Enter

Enter MONK.

PAULLO.

Look! see there! it comes.

MONK.

She is gone—for ever from thee.

VIVALDI.

By heaven the very same. Fly Paullo, bring
the torch. *[Exit. Paullo.]*

Stay I beseech thee, whether of good or evil.
By what strange pow'r dost thou know all my
steps?

What interest binds thee thus to give these warn-
ings?

Speak plainly to me, now.

MONK.

Fate speaks by death! *[Exit.]*

VIVALDI.

Stay riddler! child of darkness stop! *(he
rushes after him sword in hand.)*

Enter PAULLO, trembling, with the torch.

PAULLO.

Santa Maria! protect us. I would call, but I
fear the sound of my own voice. Lord, how this
flame quivers! No; I believe it is my hand
that shakes.

c

VIVALDI

VIVALDI (*at a distance.*)

Paullo.

PAULLO.

What's that? my name!

VIVALDI.

Paullo.

PAULLO.

Yes, it's my name sure enough.

VIVALDI.

Bring the torch this way.

PAULLO.

I beg to be excus'd. There are times and seasons for all things. What can animal courage do against the devil—I beg his pardon.

(*The monk comes behind him, and then, advancing, glares upon him in a menacing manner, and exit at the side scene.*)

(PAULLO falls upon his knees.) Saints and martyrs guard me!

Enter VIVALDI.

VIVALDI.

It has again escap'd me. Paullo, where are you? Paullo, what upon the ground? arise.

PAULLO.

Holy power forgive me! I'm a poor servant drawn into profaneness by a master it is my duty

to follow. Forbear to touch me—I feel it in my marrow, and my blood is frozen. (*hiding his face still.*)

VIVALDI.

Why, Paullo, are you mad?

PAULLO.

No doubt of it, Sir,—spirit—angel.

VIVALDI.

Come, Sir, rouse yourself—'tis I, Vivaldi speak to you.

PAULLO.

No: yes—can it? O Lord! yes, it is my master—cover me, defend a poor, fond, faithful sinner—(*clings to him.*)

VIVALDI.

Come, look up, there is no danger—The villain escap'd me. Why did'nt you bring the light?

PAULLO.

I was coming, Sir,—when all of a sudden I heard myself called, and turning my head cautiously over my right shoulder, which a man does when not very bold in a service of danger, there I saw——

VIVALDI,

Saw what? the monk!

PAULLO.

It was like a monk—that is, it had a cowl on—a little open. His face seemed the spectre of a long

long fast—He glared upon me with eyes flaming
in sockets a foot deep in his head, and the motion
of his arm, the very wind of it laid me prostrate
on the ground.—(*A bell tolls suddenly at a dis-
tance—the monk at the top of the stage speaks.*)
—Vivaldi, hark! the knell of death sounds hea-
vily! all is accomplished. [Exit.

VIVALDI.

Yes, death is in that gale! I feel it here.
It tells me that the fairest flower of earth
Is dropt into the dust—its perfume gone.
Yet I will run and clasp her to my heart,
Wooe her cold relics to benumb my life,
And even in death be wedded to Rosalba. [Exit.

PAULLO.

Master, my dear master! Hear your servant.
[Exit.

*A Cottage near ROSALBA'S—FIORESCA enters
making Nets.—(Sings.)*

A I R—FIORESCA.

I.

Other maidens bait their hooks,
With practis'd glances, tender looks;
And study tricks from subtle books,
To hold the lover fast.

Their

Their golden line of locks so fine,
 Before his simple eye they cast,
 With bending bait, and swimming gait,
 To make him sure at last.

Nonny, nonny, nonnino,
 Nonny, nonny, nonnino,
 Nonny, nonny, nonnino,
 To make him sure at last.

II.

When the village youth would bear
 Me trinkets, from the distant fair;
 However they were rich or rare,
 My Paullo pleas'd me best;
 'What tho' the work of costly art,
 They called for praise in every part,
 My Paullo with it gave his heart;
 And what was all the rest?

Nonny, nonny, &c.

And what was all the rest?

I don't very well like this employment, though
 it gives us all bread. There is something treacher-
 ous in the fisherman's art. Like the courtier he
 proportions his bait to the palate of his prey, and
 spreads his deception with most success when his
 victim is under a cloud.—(*Sings again.*)—Ah,
 Paullo, Paullo, I have however often spread my nets
 for thy affection, but I threw out no delusive bait
 —I angled only with the simple partiality of a poor
 cottager, and if I succeed, I shall be found as
 artless

artless and affectionate as I seemed to be.—(*Sings again.*)

Enter GRADISCA.

GRADISCA.

For shame, Fiorelca, what a brawling do you keep here—O, these young fry! frisking in the very mouth of the net. Poor Gudgeon, have you forgot already how our beautiful neighbour Signora Rosalba was spirited away last night from her cottage; dragged violently off, nobody knows whither?

FIORESCA.

No, mother—Her cries are even still in my ears! Can you surmise why she was carried away?

GRADISCA.

Why, I'll tell you.—You know the Count Vivaldi used to visit her secretly.

FIORESCA.

What, can he have carried her off?

GRADISCA.

As sure as you're alive, girl, She has no aunt now living to protect her.

FIORESCA.

Then shame upon him—but if my Paullo had any hand in the villainy, he shall never come into my favour again, I promise him.

GRADISCA.

GRADISCA.

What noise is that ? look to the door, girl.

Enter hastily VIVALDI and PAULLO.

VIVALDI.

Gradisca ! answer me, and quickly. Know you any thing of Signora Rosalba ?

GRADISCA.

Who I, Signor ? Holy Mary, no. Why does'nt your honour know ?

VIVALDI.

No more than you do.

PAULLO (*to Fiorezca.*)

My dear Fiorezca—we know no more of the matter than St. Januarius.

FIORESCA.

Nay, sure the saint knows well enough—I'll tell you how it was—(*they retire.*)

GRADISCA.

Why, your honour says fairly, and speaks as sincerely as heart could wish ! Well, heav'n disclose all ! There's an eye that sees to the bottom of the muddiest pool. And if its foul weather to-day, it may be fair enough to-morrow. But to my story—Spalatro has been down in the bay fishing for these two days past—He sleeps then at the old fort—and being lonesome, and tired of hear-

ing

ing Vesuvio growl at us—Fiorezca and I went to bed---I had but just got to the end of my hours, when behold you I heard a knocking at Signora Rosalba's cottage.

VIVALDI.

What time was this?

GRADISCA.

Why, as I guess'd by the few gondoliers upon the bay, it must have been near twelve. So I goes up to Fiorezca, and wakened her; and then, very softly opening the casement, we planted ourselves to watch what was doing. We did'nt stay to throw any thing over us, for the night was dark, and nobody would think of such lazzaroni as us.

VIVALDI.

Well, go on, and be brief.

GRADISCA.

The knocking continued some time. I heard her exclaim, what do you want? A voice evidently feigned replied, Come down, and you will see our business. She, alarmed I suppose at being thus talked to—refused; upon which, they very fairly entered by force.—In a few minutes, we saw the men return with the sweet Lady in their arms. She was gagged. They placed her before one of them on a horse; and then the whole party galloped off towards the wood.

VIVALDI.

VIVALDI.

Infamous villains! But I am reliev'd from my worst fear—I had suspicion of her death. My good Gradisca, I am obliged to your vigilance. “Enquire among the neighbours whether any of them remarked such an escort at that time, and what road they took.” I have my suspicions as to the perpetrators, which I will immediately realize, and then pursue her to the extremities of the universe. Paullo, attend me.

PAULLO.

I come, Sir. Farewel, girl. Good night, honest Gradisca. [Exeunt.

GRADISCA.

Ah, a kind hearted gentleman---but cross'd in love!--I warrant the Count felt a nibble upon the line, and has whipped her into the basket to flounder and flounce in vain.

Enter SPALATRO.

SPALATRO.

How now, Smelt (*to Fioreſca*) what do you do stirring at this time of the night?---Gradisca, help me off with my boots? I have had a sweeping hawl, girl. Never threw nets better in my life.

FIORESCA.

Why, father, your boots are quite dry---You haven't waded deep.

D

SPALATRO.

SPALATRO,

No, girl, but far. The prey was shallow. I have touch'd the zechins.

GRADISCA,

O Spalatro, here have been such doings---Do you know Madam Rosalba was carried off last night?

SPALATRO (*hastily.*)

Did you see it?

GRADISCA,

Why yes, I did.

SPALATRO,

Aye, that cursed curiosity---always rushing into troubled waters. What business had you with it?

GRADISCA,

None, not I---No, no---as they spawn let 'em take, say I. But here has been the young Count Vivaldi here.

SPALATRO,

I saw him---What led him here---He didn't suspect that I---

PIORESCA,

O no, father---why should he suspect you---You are no cavaliero,

GRADISCA,

I told him too that you were at the fort,

SPALATRO,

SPALATRO.

He seem'd satisfied of that?

FIORISCA.

O yes; should he not? it was the truth.

SPALATRO.

Aye—it was the truth. What did he say at parting?

GRADISCA.

That he suspected some one, and would realize his suspicions.

SPALATRO.

Whom did he suspect?

GRADISCA.

He did not tell us that——

SPALATRO.

Did you mention what you observed last night to Schedoni—I mean to Vivaldi?

GRADISCA.

O yes, I told him the little I saw.——

SPALATRO.

'Twas folly to do so; we shall be put to the question. Bestir yourself no more in this affair. Fine objects we are to provoke the Marquis, his father!

GRADISCA.

Did the young Count then carry her off?

THE ITALIAN MONK.

SPALATRO.

I have not said he did—but it is likely. Let us to bed: I am tired with riding all day.

FIORESCA.

Riding!—you mean wading, father.

SPALATRO.

True, girl; wading and rowing I mean. Come, come, to bed; and not a word I charge you of Rosalba. [*Exeunt Gra. and Fio.*] So, all's safe I find. Suspicion does not blow her blight my way. While knavery pays so well for a little mischief, no wonder if honest labour sometimes locks up his oar. [*Exit SPALATRO.*]

SCENE---*The Monastery of San Stephano.*

Enter MARGARITONE and ELLENA.

MAGARITONE.

You will stay here, until admitted to an audience of the Superior.

ELLENA.

Pray, Sister, inform me, who was that beautiful nun I heard sing so divinely at matins?

MARGARITONE.

I don't know, not I. There are a number of us beautiful women, and good singers.

ELLENA.

ELLENA.

I mean she who executed the solo passage to the Virgin.

MARGARITONE.

O that was the Sister Olivia; but we do not think so highly of her beauty as we do of her voice. She is perpetually fingering, and touches the lute in the best taste imaginable. (*Music plays.*) You may hear her now, for she seems to be preluding upon her instrument.

ELLENA.

I am interested excessively by her appearance.

MARGARITONE.

Well, I shall leave you to your recreation.

ELLENA.

Sweet sufferer, how my heart is prepared to sympathize with every pang that thine can feel! —She comes this way.

Enter OLIVIA.

OLIVIA.

My fair young Sister, peace be in your breast. And yet, if I can judge of that pure brow, A convent cannot give that peace to you. How came you to San Stephano?

ELLENA.

ELLENA.

By force
Brought and detain'd. No predispos'd mind,
By piety or passion led to seek
A cloister's consolation, drew me hither.

OLIVIA.

Ah! my dear child, some disproportion'd love—

ELLENA.

You mark my only crime: I dar'd to love.

OLIVIA.

Think me not meanly curious of your story,
But let me know your name.

ELLENA.

Ellen—Rosalba.

OLIVIA.

Ellen!—Rosalba! I think once I knew
Features like those: yes, very, very like.—
But no, it cannot be; yet am I led
To feel the tenderest interest in your fate,
And almost break my vow to counsel you.
The Abbess soon will summon you before her,
Perhaps command you instant take the veil;
Seem to consent, reject not peremptorily.

ELLENA.

What my heart tells me would be mockery,
My tongue shall never sanction by a word.

OLIVIA.

OLIVIA.

Poor soul, thou dost not know the perils here
That wait on disobedience. Think, sweet girl,
What merciless authority can pour
Upon thy head, to make resistance bitter!

ELLENA.

I know that I must struggle with oppression,
And nerve my mind against the coming storm.

OLIVIA.

Yet have we punishments that but to hear of
Would stimulate submission.—Think, dear maid,
Of being entomb'd, to dwell with putrid death;
To linger years in vaulted sepulchres,
Amidst unwholesome dews, and morbid stench
From time-dissolved flesh.

ELLENA.

Do not suppose
My purpose shaken by the nauseous horror!
Never with life will I renounce Vivaldi.

OLIVIA.

Yet O reflect what it must be to hear
The hourly tread of happy feet above thee!
The consonance of harmony divine
In fainted sisterhood; whilst thou, poor worm,
Shalt creep from shroud to shroud, thy only change,
Rest thy cold head upon some mouldering bier,
And sleep in all the chilling damps of death.

Think

Think but of this, thy firmest resolution
Will shudder into fearful acquiescence.

ELLENA.

No: death, with all its lingering harbingers,
Shall never win me from my bosom's truth.

OLIVIA.

I doubt thee, fairest. You shall have my prayers.
The Abbess comes—and I dare stay no longer.

[Exit.

*The ABBESS enters with solemnity, followed by
her Chapter. She takes a Chair prepared for
her. The Nuns range themselves on each Side.*

ABBESS.

Approach me daughter.—You, no doubt, are
conscious

You are brought hither that the charms of youth
Improperly directed may not fully
The honour of a most illustrious house.

ELLENA.

Your sanctity will pardon me. I know
No passion better than the love of truth.
It is a truth, the Count Vivaldi sought me
In honourable seeming—it is true too
That I refer'd him to his noble parents,
And lent no approbation to the suit
Which had not their allowance to sustain it,

ABBESS.

ABBESS.

Youth is habitually fickle, fair one.

“ No virgin ere would lapse from chastity

“ If the repulse to the protesting lover

“ Were never thaw'd by importunity.”

Thus much to justify my friend's precaution.

ELLENA.

But can you think distrust of their son's firmness
Gives them a warrant to imprison me ?

Am I thus torn from life and all its blessings,

Because a noble youth presumes to love me ?

O'er him, they have a parent's high controul;

But upon me no right, but such as power gives;

A tyrant's power, that's wrested from the laws,

And violates the confidence of life

ABBESS.

High notions these, from one so lowly born !

ELLENA.

No one is born too low for justice, Madam.

The humble feel as do the proudly born.

Shun pain, court pleasure, wooe esteem like them.

And the most subtle, but quick spark of love

Strikes as much fire of passion in the poor,

As that which warms the bosom of the mightiest.

ABBESS.

What ! would you burst subordination's bounds,

And level all in foul equality ?

E

ELLENA.

ELLENA.

No; and I hold such minds the world's worst
plagues;
For they have more ambition far than they
Whose power and wealth they covet. They are
slaves,
Who fire the peaceful dwellings of their lords,
To ravish, plunder from the flaming ruin.

ABBESS.

The Marchioness is just, though much offended.
She orders you, by me, to take the veil,
Or marry such a husband as befits you.
If this meek reference to their decision
Be not a fable, you can soon determine.

ELLENA.

What! because I refer'd him to his parents,
Is it presum'd I do not love Vivaldi?
Or, if the noble youth were nothing to me,
Does it thence follow I can yield my heart
To one it never throb'd at? or, if not,
Seal up its unwak'd feeling at the altar?

ABBESS.

You are too bold.

ELLENA.

Your pardon, I am injur'd.
Malice has silver tones, and placid looks.

The

The persecuted kindle with resentment,
And call a wrong a wrong—where'er they meet it.

ABBESS.

“ Is it a wrong to open wide the doors
“ Of bliss eternal, to precarious honour ?”
Is it a persecution to enfold
The feeble in religion's chaste embrace ?

ELLENA.

No, Madam, when the soul approves the dwelling.
When, stung with all the miseries of flesh,
It woos the altar to bestow its peace ;
'Tis then, what it was meant, the blest'd asylum
Of broken spirits and distracted minds.
But undesir'd, its sanctions are prophan'd,
And the august and sky-enthroned name
Dishonour'd by the impious mockery,

ABBESS.

Thus far with patience I have listen'd, daughter,
To language most unusual to this place—
But mark me—when again I call upon you,
Prepare yourself to make the choice I offer.

*(Exit followed by the Nuns—Ellena goes off
on the opposite side.)*

CHORUS OF NUNS.

HOW calm her life, who, the vain world deriding,
Here finds that peace it denied to her breast :
Care at the voice of her duty subsiding,
Visions of rapture subliming her rest.

Fancy exerting her airy dominion,
Rouzes the Nun at the breaking of day;
Sleep flies dispers'd by the rustling pinion,
The wing of the seraph who flutter'd away.
The wing of the seraph who flutter'd away.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE—*A Convent.*

SCHEDONI *before a Shrine. To him the*
MARCHIONESS.

MARCHIONESS.

FATHER, your pardon for this interruption.
Thus at the hour of night, with heavy step,
And with a heart as heavy as my tread,
I crave your best advice, and your assistance.

SCHEDONI.

Daughter, most welcome. But it should appear
There was no need to tempt the falling dews
For such advice as mine : my Lord the Marquis
Is the best guardian of his house's honour.

MARCHIONESS.

The Marquis is the slave of prejudice :
Bred in confin'd and narrow principles,
He cannot reach at lofty purposes
By means uncommon ; when he should rush to
action,
He but deliberates 'twixt just and unjust,
And poises scruples in a trembling balance.—
He must not be consulted. But remember,
What passes here is sacred.

SCHEDONI.

As confession.

MARCHY-

MARCHIONESS.

This son of mine still hangs upon my heart.
Unhappy boy!—Know you his late proceedings?

SCHEDONI.

When first he found we had remov'd his mistress,
He fought me in my convent: I was busied
In the most holy office of our faith,
And rapt in penitential recollection,
He impiously assail'd my meditation,
Broke in upon contrition, and with menace
Slander'd my unsoil'd name and character.
Our brethren saw, and will resent the insult,

MARCHIONESS.

What tidings have we from the Lady Abbess?

SCHEDONI.

There are no bounds to sacrilege like his:
Know, he has dar'd profane the sanctuary,
And snatch'd his minion even from the altar.

MARCHIONESS.

I see we cannot be secure an instant,
Unless the girl be first dispos'd of. This
It is that now distracts my thoughts. What
manner——

SCHEDONI.

And are you still to think upon the manner?
Souls such as yours should promptly execute

With

With courage, scorning vulgar modes of action.
Were this shrewd wanton by the law condemn'd,
How eagerly would you applaud the sentence!
You feel the justice, yet dare not inflict it.

MARCHIONESS.

The law will lend no shield to such proceedings.

SCHEDONI.

You have the church, to shield an act of justice:
For daring virtue it has absolution.

MARCHIONESS.

Does virtue stand in need of absolution?

SCHEDONI.

When I said so, I spoke to common notions.
Remember that the girl is not immortal!
A few years cut off from her guilty life,
The honour of your family is sav'd.

MARCHIONESS.

Speak low, some one may lurk behind these pillars.—

Necessity admitted for this act,
How may it be perform'd?—we cannot trust
The important vengeance to a mercenary.

SCHEDONI (*ruminating.*)

No: mercenaries cannot here be trusted.

MARCHIONESS.

Yet, who but such would—

SCHEDONI.

SCHEDONI.

You amaze me, daughter.

Why should we hesitate to right ourselves?

MARCHIONESS.

Ah! holy Father, where exists another
Like you, prepar'd at once for thought and action?
But when can this be done—the place, the man-
ner?

SCHEDONI.

Down in the bay stands a lone habitation,
But seldom noted: there a fisherman,
After his day of toil, finds fordid shelter.
I know the wretch, and know he may be trusted.

MARCHIONESS.

But yet, being mean and needy, are we safe?

SCHEDONI.

Lady, suffice it that I know the man.

MARCHIONESS.

I could have wish'd the secret and the deed
Had left me debtor only to yourself.

SCHEDONI.

Could you suppose that I would do a murder?

MARCHIONESS.

A murder! no.—An act of justice, virtue!
Great souls anticipate the common process,
And boldly dare redress the wrong they suffer.

SCHEDONI.

SCHEDONI.

I could convince you, we may trust this fellow.

MARCHIONESS.

Well, for the place: you mention'd a lone house.

SCHEDONI.

True: in a chamber of that house, there is——

(Low music heard.)

MARCHIONESS.

What noise was that?—'Tis melancholy music,
Touch'd by a fearful hand.

SCHEDONI.

Within that chamber
There is a secret door.

MARCHIONESS.

Fram'd for what purpose?

SCHEDONI.

Suffice it that 'tis apt for our design.
A passage leads thence to the sea—at night
Its waves will leave no print of what has pass'd.
(Music low and solemn.)

MARCHIONESS.

Again.—It is a requiem---one departed.

SCHEDONI.

Heaven's peace be with him. I am summon'd
hence.—

Rely on my affection and my zeal. *[Exit.]*

(Music again.)

F

MARCHI-

MARCHIONESS.

'Tis a first requiem, and the soul but just
 Escap'd its fleshly dwelling. *That* is cold,
 Cold now and still, which but an hour gone by
 Was fill'd with mind, and throbbing with sensa-
 tion.

And what am I?---the enemy of life!
 Come here to plot, perhaps against a *soul*!
 Return, Schedoni! No! he hears me not.
 How feeble are our strongest resolutions!
 While passion rul'd in my distracted frame,
 It found not, or it conquer'd all my scruples;
 One feeble note, a sound, an airy breath,
 Strikes on the heart, and wakes my slumb'ring pity.
 Ungrateful son, what misery you cause me!
 My peace of mind is lost, I fear for ever. [*Exit.*]

SCENE---a Church.

VIVALDI *leading in* ELLENA.

VIVALDI.

Revive my love, and let those drooping eyes
 Lift their pure beams to happiness and love!
 The storm is past away that menac'd you.

ELLENA.

Vivaldi, I once thought no earthly power
 Should lead me to accept your offer'd plight
 Unsanction'd by your parents---Their injustice
 And your entreaty must absolve my vow.

VIVALDI

THE ITALIAN MONK.

35

VIVALDI.

Why tarries thus the reverend Priest—'tis so—
Duty is tardy to the eager wish
Of bliss-expecting love—But see, he comes !

Enter PRIEST.

Forgive me, Father, that I thought you long.
Ah ! could your feet keep pace with youthful
fancy

You had anticipated sun-rise—hurried
From sleepless midnight to the altar's foot,
And counted every pulse of yonder clock,
That circulates the creeping blood of time ;
Gaz'd on the dial, doubted every minute,
That accident had fetter'd down his hand,
And mock'd meridian day with morning hours.

PRIEST.

May it be ever thus !

VIVALDI.

Most reverend Sir,

Proceed you to the rites—O if you know
What 'tis to lose and to regain a treasure
Dearer than life itself, you will not wonder
At this impatience to secure the blessing.

PRIEST.

Young son, I yield me to your virtuous wishes.
That gentle 'haviour, daughter, does announce

No felt aversion to the youth's request.
 What therefore 'tis my pleasing task to do
 Is to pronounce in the most holy name
 Of mother church the solemn benediction.

Enter several OFFICERS.

1st OFFICER.

Stop—Proceed no further with the rites.

ELLENA.

Vivaldi, we are betray'd—Behold those men—

VIVALDI.

Father, proceed—he dies, who interrupts you.

Enter Men in the Garb of the Inquisition.

1st OFFICER.

In the name of the most holy inquisition
 I charge you, Vincent di Vivaldi—You
 Ellena di Rosalba, to surrender.

VIVALDI.

Of what am I accus'd?

OFFICER.

Of merely stealing this Nun from the Monastery
 of San Stephano. You may swear safely to the
 fact, for she wears the veil of her profession at this
 moment.

VIVALDI.

The veil is none of hers—this holy Father

I have

I have already satisfied--a friend
Supplied the kind concealment of her flight.

OFFICER.

Confession of the robbery ! We believe we shall
be able to prove her profess'd---You must go
both of you before the inquisition at Rome.

VIVALDI.

Or give me way, or, by my love I swear,
My sword shall cut a passage through your hearts.

PAULLO *rushes in with his sword drawn.*

PAULLO.

Nay, come, I'll tickle some of you. Come on,
you tipstaves for the devil's court---Here are two
of us candidates for San Benitos---Win us and we
wear them.

*(They fight---one of the Officers is wounded;
at last they disarm VIVALDI and
PAULLO.)*

OFFICER.

Bring them away. Bear off the Lady first.

VIVALDI,

No, let me perish rather---On my knees
I supplicate the mercy of her company.

OFFICER.

A pleasant jest indeed !---In company !
Let criminals accompany each other !

—Fine.

Fine evidence would be the consequence: I have said I
Besides, indulgence after such resistance,
One of our brethren wounded by your sword.

PAULLO.
Nay, friend, let your old black patron the
devil have his due: The sprinkling of blood there
is a piece of my handy work I assure you; and I
only with the same lancet could breathe the veins
of your whole fraternity.

VIVALDI.

Paullo, I charge you, cease this idle folly.
The wound was given by me.

OFFICER.

We know it, Sir, but he shall answer for his pro-
fane scurrilities in another place.

PAULLO.

Let me. And if you will rack the truth out
of me, let their reverences look to it. If I don't
whip their consciences with good stinging-nettle
sarcasms, when they have done with me, may I
visit their master the devil next door to em.

VIVALDI.

O my best love--I cannot succour thee.

ELLENA.

Vivaldi---O Vivaldi---

[*They are torn off by the Officers. Exit. Priest.*]

SCENE—the Cottage of SPALATRO.

Enter FIORESCA.

FIORESCA.

I can't think what my father does down in the bay so long? As sure as I live, he was concern'd in carrying off Lady Ellena. He had not been fishing that's clear. He had got money, for I heard the chink of the zechins. O that I could but whisper what I think to Paullo! And yet it might bring my father into trouble.

Enter GRADISCA.

But, my mother comes.

GRADISCA.

Ah, daughter, daughter. Yonder is doleful doings.

FIORESCA.

Where, mother?

GRADISCA.

Why, at the church of our Lady. The Count Vivaldi stole it seems Madam Rosalba from the Convent of San Stephano; and to our Lady they came to be married; but at the very altar they were seized—and fighting followed; and Paullo drew his sword; and to sum up all in a word, they were overpowered and carried off to the prison of the Inquisition.

FIORESCA.

FIORESCA.

Paullo, too! Wounded!

GRADISCA.

No, no. Not wounded—but worse, worse.

FIORESCA.

How worse, dear mother?

GRADISCA.

Why, as I hear, seeing his master in this non-plus, he flew at the officers like a sword-fish, and stabbed one of them an ugly gash. But they turned upon 'em like sharks, and it is death to resist 'em.

FIORESCA.

O, Paullo, Paullo! (*weeps.*)

GRADISCA.

Ah, poor wench, well may'st thou weep and take on. He was as good a youth as ever serv'd up macaroni, and as reverent to age, as if he had liv'd in the good old times.—I'll go and bring Father Sebastian hither to comfort you. O, that's a good Priest, aye, and a wise one too. I should never be so comfortable as I am, if it were not for his pious exhortations.

FIORESCA.

I shall never know comfort more, mother, if any harm befall poor Paullo.

GRADISCA.

GRADISCA.

You cannot say that.---Hear Father Sebastian,
that's all, and then tell me so. [Exit.

FIORESCA.

I have determin'd. It's a long distance for
a lone girl; but no distance shall keep me from
him. Yes, I will go to the gates of his prison,
whisper into his dungeon that I would die to
save him; and then bid my poor heart break and
be at peace.

Ah! this reminds me of the unhappy fate of
poor Mary of our village.

A I R.

DARK was the night, the children slept,
Poor MARY climb'd the cottage stair,
And at her chamber window wept,
And plac'd a little taper there.
Why does he tarry thus, she cried?
Alas! what pains do I endure!
Heav'n grant this taper be his guide,
And lead him safe across the moor.

II.

At length his well known voice she hears;
"He comes, my terror to remove!"
"My William comes to dry my tears."
And down she flies to meet her love.

G

William

William all pale and bloody stood ;
 Sigh'd out " alas ! no more we meet !
 " I'm stabb'd by robbers in the wood."
 Then fell a corse at Mary's feet.

[*Exit.*

SCENE---*A strong dismantled lonely Fort upon
 the Sea-side.*

Enter STILETTO, CORVINO *and others, with*
 ELLENA.

1st OFFICER.

We are at our journey's end.

ELLENA (*aside.*)

'Tis as I fear'd. Do we sleep here to night ?

2d OFFICER.

You do, my fair one.

1st OFFICER.

What ho ! Spalatro !

ELLENA,

When do we set forward ?

2d OFFICER.

We go to-night. He's dead asleep. Spalatro !

Enter SPALATRO, *from the Fort-gate.*

SPALATRO.

What, in the devil's name, keep you such a
 bawling,

bawling for? You're soon enough for the chear you're like to find.

1st OFFICER.

Here is your charge. You know the rest I think?

SPALATRO.

Aye, aye. Wont you come in, damsel? This is a rude lodging; but the guests seldom complain. They are scurvily treated 'tis true; but then they sleep very quietly.

ELLENA.

I have no doubt of that friend. Lost for ever.
(*aside.*) [Exeunt into the Fort.

SCENE---*The Inside of the Place, a Table, a Lamp on it; a few Stools, and a Fire at a Distance.*

Re-enter SPALATRO, ELLENA, and the TWO OFFICERS.

SPALATRO.

Well, here we are—You must be weary, Sister. I'll dress some fish, and we've a stoop of wine, A potent cordial for low spirits, girl. You'll need refreshment for your coming journey. My maxim is a short and merry life—No bad one—Ha! Corvino! Come, some wine.

ELLENA.

I beg you will excuse me. The fatigue
Of journeying so quickly makes me think
A bed the best refreshment I can find.
Pray shew me to my chamber for the night.

SPALATRO.

Well ; if nothing else suits your palate, e'en as
you like. I'll shew it you. Come, this way.

[He takes a lamp, and she follows him out.]

STILETTO.

Come, come, off with your holy skin, Corvino.
Aye, aye, now I know you for as true a knight
of the stiletto, as ever practised justice in the court
of honour.

CORVINO.

Nay, the profession is honourable, no doubt.
It is a sort of trial after term ; what common leets
take no cognizance of, we decide, and the best of
our practice is dispatch,

STILETTO.

You shan't find me a profession equal to it,
either for courage or dexterity. The art to way-
lay, the address to shift to any shape, and hold
any language. Compare it with the trades most
in vogue.

CORVINO.

Aye, marry ; draw me some comparisons,
brother. Try it with the soldier's.

STILETTO.

O, a mere flea-bite in respect of the danger; requiring less subtlety in design, and less promptitude in the execution. Besides, you shall have him be as active in the wrong as in the right. Now we never use arms but to redress some injury.

CORVINO.

To the next—we carry it hollow—there.

STILETTO.

As to your physician, he gives death with torture. Ours is scarcely felt, and always sudden. He with his lotions and his potions holds nature as it were in purgatory. We set up upon a single pill, the extract of lead, which never fails to cure all disorders.

CORVINO.

Go on, go on. The lawyer's will not 'pose you.

STILETTO.

O, no, that's too clear a case to dwell on. He strips you of your land, and leaves your heirs to beggary—We take away only the living incumbrance, and bestow the property entire.

Enter SPALATRO.

CORVINO.

Spalatro returns,

SPALATRO.

SPALATRO.

I don't half like the business.

CORVINO.

How now—What devil has played truant, and left a corner of thy heart scrupulous—Hav't you noble payment for her lodging?

SPALATRO.

She looks so innocently; and moreover, brother stabbers, I have a child myself. As she flung herself on the damn'd mattresses, I look'd at her by the lamp, and thought I beheld my own girl, Fiorelca——

STILETTO.

Come, come; we must have no qualms like these. Either dispatch the business like a man, or we will earn this other purse ourselves.

SPALATRO.

No, no; I wasn't so chicken-hearted as that neither; only I did not like to trust the steadiness of my hand. His Reverence mix'd a bowl of milk here, which I laid by her, and I'll trust the Friar's balsam against hope in this world. I'm pleas'd to be rid of the deed, I can tell you. But come, our fish is ready.

1st OFFICER.

You look disorder'd, Spalatro. Come, a cup of wine to dissipate vapours.

SPALATRO.

SPALATRO.

I believe it was that curs'd bleak gallery that
chill'd me. You remember, Corvino, your handy
work in the chamber——

CORVINO.

Pooh, pooh; some wine, boys, and let us sing
the chorus that Trombone made upon our way of
living.

CHORUS.

HARK, the night crow shrieks for food!

Wolves are howling in the wood!

To the cottage clowns retire,

And quake around the scanty fire.

Then we track the gloomy way,

Lurking to ensnare our prey.

'Tis he, stand close. Strike by surprize.

What light's that? 'Tis the fire-gnat flies.

Now then take aim! he falls, he dies.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter SCHEDONI.

There are, who, wandering at this lonely hour,
With murder for the herald of their way,
Would dream that every gust of fretful wind
Rebuk'd their purpose, and the roaring sea
In solemn sentences condemned the deed.
Ev'n I, whose reason mocks such childish thoughts,
Feel unaccustom'd dread palsy my progress.
In this rude solitude I turn and start,
As though my path were planted with observers.
Spalatro!

Enter

Enter SPALATRO.

SPALATRO.

Here.

SCHEDONI.

Well, hast thou done this business?

SPALATRO.

No, for she laps up poison like an adder. I laid the bowl beside her.

SCHEDONI.

Is it gone?

SPALATRO.

Yes, she but sleeps though; I am just come from her. Her rest is much disturbed.

SCHEDONI.

That must be remedied. Here, take this dagger, and the work is easy.

SPALATRO.

I have no great affection to the thing.

SCHEDONI.

But, the reward.—

SPALATRO.

Well, the reward---I grant you. [*Exit.*

SCHEDONI.

This blow atchieves my object. All were doubtful,
Did I not work the Marchioness to something

That

That render'd it unsafe to dare refuse me.
 She is my debtor now in all she has :
 Her bond is of such force when writ in blood,
 As to restore what once was Marinella.——
 Those steps of terror tell me it is done.

SPALATRO (within.)

Father Schedoni !

SCHEDONI.

Here, Spalatro.——Well---

Enter SPALATRO, with the Lamp and Dagger.

Am I obey'd---have you perform'd this deed?
 What mean those ghastly looks?---that bloodless
 weapon?

SPALATRO.

The gallery---the gallery——I dare not.

SCHEDONI.

Daftard ! What bug-bear have you conjur'd up,
 To scare your senseless spirit from its office?

SPALATRO.

Go there yourself: I saw it, and I heard it.
 Murder the innocent ! No: I'll sleep o' nights.
 Do it yourself: here, take the dagger from me---
 Take it——My hand is white again !

SCHEDONI.

Base coward !

Stay then 'till I return.

H

SPALA-

SPALATRO.

No, you'll excuse me.

Your Holiness may shield me from the devil---
I'll wait without.

SCHEDONI.

Where is the cloak, to wrap around the body?

SPALATRO.

It hangs just by the door---you see it, there.

SCHEDONI.

Give me the lamp.

SPALATRO.

You have it in your hand?

SCHEDONI.

I mean the dagger.

SPALATRO.

It is in your girdle.

SCHEDONI.

Now then attend me.

SPALATRO.

That is not the way.

SCHEDONI.

O, true---she sleeps you say.

[Exit.]

SPALATRO.

She does.

[Follows.]

SCENE

SCENE—*Draws, and discovers ELLENA sleeping upon a wretched Pallet-bed; a Table, and empty Bowl on it.*

SCHEDONI *enters with the Lamp.*

SCHEDONI.

Yes, she's asleep! Fie on these shaking joints!
Does not my interest tell me she must die?
Hush! sure she speaks!—She never will speak more.
Oh! such weak thinkings will unman me quite.
How deep that sigh!—Her whole frame seems
convuls'd.—

Can I remove her robe and not awake her—

(He looks at her Breast, and seeing a Picture starts; then eagerly detaches it, drops the Dagger, and shuddering draws back in an Agony of Horror.)

Am I alive? and do my eyes see truly?
Or are these features but a fancied charm,
To bind that devil, which tempts me to destruction?
Ellen!—awake! awake!

(ELLENA starts up, shrieks, and falls at his Feet.)

ELLENA.

O save me! save me!

Spalatro will destroy me!

SCHEDONI.

Quickly, tell me,
How came you by this picture?

THE ITALIAN MONK.

ELLENA.

'Twas my mother's.

SCHEDONI.

Whose the resemblance---tell me, on your life?

ELLENA.

It is my father's portrait, and—

SCHEDONI.

His name?

ELLENA.

The Count de Marinella.

SCHEDONI.

My child, my child---In me behold that father.
 Yet spare me---I shall blast you with my touch.
 Stand off! The springs of love are poison'd here:
 O misery! To have a star unknown,
 Beaming with brightness rise upon my view,
 While all the hemisphere is stain'd with blood.
 Let me gaze on thee! O that sweet alarm!
 Be hush'd my child---no danger shall approach
 thee.

I'll make this breast a bulwark to defend thee.

I rave! O pardon me! and bless your father.

ELLENA.

I stand amaz'd---Eternal Providence!
 A father, my deliverer! O, Sir, tell me,
 Why the first care I meet with from my parent
 Preserves the life he gave? My infant years

Ne'er

Ne'er knew a daughter's duty ; but my heart
Is apt I feel to learn its filial lesson.

SCHEDONI.

You shall know all, my child. But ah ! the
drink !

ELLENA.

Distrusting it, I threw it down, between
The bars of yonder window. (*seeing it on the
ground.*)

Ha ! a Dagger !

The villain would have stabb'd me as I slept,
Had not the father sav'd me from the blow.

SCHEDONI (*walks from her in the greatest Agony.*)

My Ellen, if you would not blast my senses,
Mention this scene no more. Blot it from me-
mory.

Here, from this hour of terror and of transport,
Promise, if possible, never to think of it.

ELLENA.

O, should I not ? when it reminds my heart,
How infinite the debt I owe my father !
Where is Spalatro ? Send that villain hence.
Supported even by you, I dare not see him.

SCHEDONI.

He shall not meet your eye. Retire my child.
The morning dawns. Get on your cloak, your veil,
We

We will set out this moment. When I call,
Come forth my sweet one. [*Exit. ELLENA.*

SCHEDONI.

Ho! Spalatro!

Enter SPALATRO, with a cloak.

SPALATRO.

Here.

Here is the cloak to hide the body in.

SCHEDONI.

Villain, be dumb---another such a word---

SPALATRO.

What! will not *her* life then suffice you, Priest?

SCHEDONI.

She lives! dear as my life itself.

SPALATRO.

She lives!

Where? for I see no signs of her existence.

SCHEDONI.

Be silent; let no syllable escape you
Of that accurs'd design. I will reward you.
Hope shall be outrun by my bounty to thee,
So thou art trusty. We must leave you straight.
Be not you seen by her. Hence good Spalatro.

[*Exit. SPALATRO.*

How

How badly read is destiny's dark page
 By man, who thinks himself a god in foresight.
 To tear Vivaldi from his lovely bride,
 Ambition would have made me kill my child !
 Yet what more sanguine wish could my soul form,
 Than to behold the heir of great Vivaldi
 Espouse the daughter of the Monk Schedoni ?
 Vivaldi now ; but that shall shape our course.
 My Ellena, approach.

Enter ELLENA.

ELLENA.

Here, my best father.

SCHEDONI.

Come, my sole pride---we will away for Rome ;
 And think me not averse to thy attachment.
 Vivaldi shall be thine. I dote in fondness.
 My heart, unus'd to be awaken'd thus,
 Does like the bursting rock, gush out in streams ;
 The flood is pure, and will refine its channel.
 Come, come, my child--- [Exeunt.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE—*A Hall.*

Enter two FAMILIARS of the Inquisition, with PAULLO struggling.

PAULLO.

WHAT, separate me from my master! No, burn me if you do. Do, good catholic bonfire-makers, consider me with a little christian charity. What did I pray to come hither for but to be with him? Do you think I had any desire to see the inside of this infernal palace---that I came to the devil out of curiosity?

1st FAMILIAR.

Fellow, no more of this. One may see you are a heretic by your manners.

PAULLO.

What, is it heresy when honest love takes the muzzle off a man's tongue for a minute or two? Call me what you please: Here I am, Paullo Mendrico, determined to perish with my poor master. If this is heresy, I glory in it. You shall find me toughly persist in it at the stake; and, if my coward tongue fail for a moment to proclaim it, may I fare worse in the next world than even an inquisitor.

2d FAMILIAR.

Comrade, persuade this fool to submit quietly:

If he talks in this way much longer, he will excite notice, and draw punishment upon his obstinacy.

1st FAMILIAR.

Pray tell me; did not you say your name was Paullo Mendrico?

PAULLO.

Yes, and I am not ashamed of it any where.

1st FAMILIAR.

You are a Neapolitan.

PAULLO.

I am, I hope I need not be ashamed of that either.

1st FAMILIAR.

Look at me well, Paullo; don't you know me?

PAULLO.

Take off your death's head, and I'll try; no, yes, why it can't be Carlo! what Carlo.

1st FAMILIAR.

The same, a little altered may be.

PAULLO.

O not at all: you were always a devilish odd fellow. But what has brought you into purgatory before your time, Carlo?

1st FAMILIAR.

No matter, Paullo. Here I am, I can't say very glad to see you in this place; for between ourselves

ourselves I am tired of it myself, but very much disposed to serve you.

PAULLO.

Serve me! then you must serve my master; Mind, Carlo! here I swear beforehand to accept no favour he does not partake. I am come here for the love of my master, and will not be wheedled by a selfish care of my own carcase to desert him.

st FAMILIAR.

We will speak more at length to-morrow: what I can do I will. I will shew you to your cell, and order all things for your comfort.

PAULLO.

Don't talk of comfort to me; comfort my master. [Exeunt.]

SCENE---A Cell, with a Couch.

VIVALDI starts as from sleep.

VIVALDI.

How strong, how vivid are the fancy's pictures!
Reality could not impress more terror
Than I now feel from formless phantasy.
Methought I saw the monk of dark Paluzzi,
His cowl uplifted, frown upon my misery;
His right arm bare, and in his grasp a dagger.
He pointed to the blade embath'd in blood,
And, in a voice that thrill'd my very heart,
Call'd me by name, and bade me to attend him.

(*The Monk ascends behind the Couch in the Attitude described.*)

THE ITALIAN MONK.

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MONK.

Vivaldi, mark me.

VIVALDI.

Horror! do I dream?
Or waking do my senses still retain
The images of sleep? Speak yet again,
Thou spirit of terror! Tell me by what power
That airy shape, which threaten'd in the gloom
Of night and rude Paluzzi, follows me
To these close dens of savage superstition,
And cleaves the earth to aggravate its horrors?

MONK.

Listen 'till I unfold me. Well thou say'st
I fought thee at Paluzzi; there I warn'd thee
To shun the mischief that has brought thee hither.
My present task is link'd to that vast chain,
Which winds about the life of an assassin,
And drags him through the lapse of time and action,
To expiate his crimes.

VIVALDI.

My ears are rivetted
To thy mysterious language; but instruct me
How I am implicated in its meaning?
No stain of murder burns in crimson here.

MONK.

Thou'rt in the toils of fate; I come to save thee.
When next interrogated, summon before thy judges
The Count de Bruno, known now by the name
And style, Father Schedoni: accuse thou him

Of having sacrific'd a guiltless wife,

VIVALDI,

If on such admonition, I consent,
Which rashness only could resolve upon,
What proof have I to offer of these facts?

MONK,

Cite as thy witness a right pious man
Father Anfaldo: Bid him recollect
What in confession was reveal'd to him
Some fourteen years since, on San Marco's eve,

VIVALDI,

How if his memory have lost the secret
Entrusted then?

MONK,

He never can forget it.
It lives as freshly there, as if this moment
The lep'rous soul heav'd up the guilt before him,

VIVALDI,

But how adjur'd will the confessor break
The silence of confession? 'Tis a seal
Upon the errors of all-finning mortals,
The claims of penitence on heavenly mercy,
Written in bosoms secret as the grave,
And only legible to God himself.

MONK.

The Inquisition can absolve this silence.
Stand thou resolv'd to execute my bidding.

If thou shalt disobey, expect a fate,
Such as he merits, who would stay the stroke
Offended Justice levels at the guilty.

VIVALDI.

But say wilt thou be present at the trial?

MONK.

I will, perhaps invisibly to thee.

Yet we shall meet, and in the hall of death.

[*The Monk descends.*]

VIVALDI. (*Afide.*)

When will these mysteries clear up to my reason?
If I should tell how I have been commanded,
Would not they deem me frenzied, or suborn'd
By some malicious foe to slander innocence?
I cannot without further proof—

(*turning round.*) ha! vanish'd!

I have heard of spirits unblest'd, who fought this
world,

To madden solitude and urge destruction,
But heeded not the tales, as bed-rid fancies,
The foul creation of perturbed brains.
I shall believe all quickly---pin my faith
To gossip legends, and, with pious awe,
Hold midnight peopled with released souls.
The thing look'd corporal; its motion earthly;
And all its visage lighten'd with the glare
Of human vengeance. I must search this deeper.
What ho! the guard without there! Speak to me.

Bolts undrawn. Enter two of the Guard.

1st GUARD,

What would you?

Speak.

2d GUARD.

VIVALDI.

Have any enter'd here?

1st GUARD.

When?

VIVALDI.

Why now, within the last half hour.

2d GUARD.

He dreams. A likely thing indeed. Pray tell me
Are doors like these easily penetrable?

VIVALDI.

Nay, but be very certain I conjure you;
If you have slept, say so, I'll not accuse you.

1st GUARD.

We sleep---No, Sir, we value life too highly.

VIVALDI.

My friends, in solemn earnestness I ask,
Is there no other entrance to this cell?

2d GUARD.

None; you need only ask your eyes that question,

A Bell strikes.

That bell informs us we must lead you hence
For secret scrutiny.

VIVALDI.

'Tis very strange.

Come lead me thither, friends. I am lost in it.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE

SCENE—*The Country about Rome.*

SCHEDONI *leading in ELLENA.*

SCHEDONI.

Believe me, child, whatever I have seem'd,
And I take shame to me for past neglect,
You shall find in your late recovered father
As fond a zeal to cherish and indulge
As ever nature kindled in the parent.

ELLENA.

I have no wish but one ungratified.
I had been taught to think that both my parents
Died ere I felt their loss. I find a father,
And his first kindness snatches me from death.
The working stream of accident indulges
A further hope. O, does my mother live?

SCHEDONI.

My child the hope is vain. Yet know, thou dear one,
I would rejoice, so she were but alive,
To make my bed upon the flinty rock,
Its scanty moss my pillow, and its roots
The meagre diet of my failing age;
To quit ev'n thee for solitude and penance,
So I could tell my soul Matilda liv'd.

ELLENA.

Ah, Sir, how died my mother!

SCHEDONI.

Spare me, Ellen.

I would preserve thy love, my gentle child.

Let

Let sorrow for the errors of thy father.
Subdue thy curiosity.

ELLENA.

I yield me.

And in the gratitude for what is giv'n,
Sink the regret for that which I have lost.

SCHEDONI.

But to my purpose. The young Count Vivaldi
Is on slight accusation now confined,
The reason of our journey hither child
Is his deliverance, which my influence
Will render easy.

ELLENA.

Does my father view
With pleasure that attachment in his child?

SCHEDONI.

It is most welcome to me. And his family
Will be propitious now to the alliance.

Enter 2d FAMILIAR, an Officer of the Inquisition.

OFFICER.

Stop! You, Marinella Count de Bruno, of late
known by the name of Father Schedoni, I am or-
dered to bring before the Inquisition.

SCHEDONI.

Officer I obey and willingly,
It was to appear before them I came hither.
Let this young lady be bestow'd with kindness
Till the affair that summons me be finish'd.

OFFICER.

OFFICER.

She may command the best accommodation we can bestow, or take up her residence within the city.

ELLENA.

No, I will never quit thee, my dear father.

To Schedoni.

Sir, lead me where this reverend priest is going.

Place with *you* is nothing. *(To Schedoni.)*

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE---*A Cell in the Prison.*PAULLO *alone.*

Heigho! I am quite deceived, and as melancholy as St. Bruno. O for a little lively active torture to rouse my mind out of the vapours. I begin to find that the *question* is a very friendly call upon a man's bones; and prevents his soul from dropping dead asleep in the black ugly silence of a prison.

What did I come here for, do they think? Why, to share my master's fate to be sure; and here I know no more what he suffers than if the same roof did not shelter us. Their Reverences overlook me. Perhaps they don't think a poor servant worth their notice. What's this; precedence in purgatory? Zounds I could give up my share in my master's good fortune; but his calamities are a common stock; and I have as much right to suffer as he has.

Enter CARLO.

CARLO.

Well, Paullo. How are you man? You are likely to get over this business easily I find.

PAULLO.

What do you call easy? I would sooner leap into the bowels of Vesuvius, than pass another day here.

CARLO.

Why, I call it ease, to escape the thumb-screw. You perhaps may call stretching upon the rack, basking upon roses; and hope to crown a life of such good works, by the *flaming* zeal of an act of faith.

PAULLO.

Ha! how! what Count Vivaldi march in an Auto da fé? for what Carlo?

CARLO.

Why, don't you know yet? For heresy, man, to be sure.

PAULLO.

Heresy! they belye him! Upon my soul they do. I never knew a better christian. But how comes the wind to have chang'd? It may be sacrilege to rob a church even of a fucking sister, but sacrilege is not heresy.

CARLO.

Why, at the examination last night, he was asked whether he never broke in upon an act of penance, and drove away a Monk from the shrine before which he was confessing.

PAULLO.

Why, I do remember hearing him say that he had shaken up the conscience of a rascally Baldpate, who had done him some shrewd turns.

CARLO.

That is the subject of his accusation then. You see how far my friendship for you stretches, Paullo. And now I'll trust you with a secret. I am weary

of being whipper-in here. I'll retire, and, contrary to received custom, without a pension, give up the keys of office and abscond. You shall accompany me. (*Fioreſca ſings.*)

PAULLO.

But hush! hark! what voice is that? My den must be near the road side. (*again.*) Listen, again. I know that voice, O bleſs its ſweet pipe. 'Tis my own dear Fioreſca. (*again.*)

S O N G.

A Maiden bewailing her true lover's fate,

Along the flinty way,

Sadly journeyed night and day,

Till ſhe came to his priſon gate.

CARLO.

Would you like to ſee her?

PAULLO.

Aſk your own heart, man.

CARLO.

Then you ſhall. I can open a poſtern here in the wall, and introduce her.—But, no raptures mind you. The walls are ſo unus'd to any ſound of joy, it might have a very ſail effect upon them. (*CARLO goes out, and brings her in to PAULLO.*)

FIORESCA.

Oh, my poor Paullo!

PAULLO.

My love! (*They embrace.*) Well, but tell me, you dear rogue, how you have come alone, all this tedious journey, to ſing at the door of my cage?

FIORESCA.

I don't know, Paullo; I needed little by the

way; for your misfortune was the only thing I thought about. Love instructed me in a road unknown; and at night, when I lay me down by the way-side, I lifted my thoughts to the Virgin, and rose refresh'd and safe.

CARLO.

Come, Paullo, you have now a fair opportunity; evening is throwing her grey cloak over the Campagna; we may escape together.

FIORISCA.

A thousand, thousand blessings on you.—But, Paullo, you are dull—Does not my Paullo rejoice to see me?

PAULLO.

O yes, my girl.—But you must go alone.

FIORISCA.

Alone!

PAULLO.

Yes: I must remain here.

CARLO.

How! is the lad distracted?

PAULLO.

No: never more in my senses. I prefer my duty to my pleasures—I stay here with my master.

FIORISCA.

Consider, Paullo; you can do him no good; you cannot bear his pain for him.

PAULLO.

How do you know that? I can bear it with him: and as to the good I may do him, I feel myself, at this moment, how dear is the consolation of one who loves us. (*Kisses her.*) Fioreſca, my good girl, don't try to make me a traitor.

The first step from right is fatal; and what security would you have, who cherished a viper in your breast, which you had seen sting the hand that gave it food?

FIGORESCA.

I shall never, never see you more.

PAULLO.

Why then you have now seen the best of me.

FIGORESCA.

Ah, dear! would masters, think ye, go such lengths for their servants?

PAULLO.

Why, I don't know, nor is it material: I never knew that attachment was an affair of barter. When my heart tells me it is my duty to stay, I shall never rummage up my brain for motives to run away from it. Carlo will guide you; and I will look after you till my eye-strings crack.

T R I O.

LOVE no toil regarding,

All its pains rewarding,

Blessing, distressing,

No danger can affright:

In love's sweetest anguish,

Whilst thrilling with the pain,

Who'd not willing languish,

Nor think the suffering vain?

Then let lovers think them blest,

Nor repine at froward fate;

In each others arms carest,

Their bliss is perfect, tho' 'tis late.

[*Exeunt* CARLO and FIGORESCA.]

SCENE—*A Gothic Hall.*

VIVALDI enters with ELLENA.

"VIVALDI.

"My Ellena! do I once more behold thee?"

"Let this embrace be as the seal of fate,

"And join our hearts for ever.

"ELLENA.

"O, Vivaldi!

"To see thee thus, in freedom and at ease,

"Is such excess of joy, that all the pains

"Endur'd since last we met are blotted out,

"Like the soft traces of the morning dream."

VIVALDI.

But say, my life, how has the interval

Of separation wrung that gentle breast?

ELLENA.

Briefly—When torn from thee, before the altar,
 I was conducted to a dreary hovel,
 'Gainst which the angry sea dashes in vain,
 The haunt of dark assassins. There Spalatro,
 At dead of night, had stabb'd me while I rested,
 But Heav'n was wakeful, though half nature slept,
 Sent my deliverer---and in him a father.

VIVALDI.

Merciful powers!—a father?

Now listen to my tale, which, tho' less perilous,

Is not less full of wonder. Hither brought,

One night I started from a fev'rish dream

Of that dark monk, whom I have told thee of;

When lo! close to my couch, the boding phantom

Glar'd on me, menacing. His arm was bare,

And in his grasp a dagger.

In fierce and awful accents he denounc'd
Th' affassin who had us'd it; and, for proof,
Bade me to call the holy Priest who heard
The wretch himself confess the savage murder
Of his own wife. Ev'n now I have obey'd him.
But O, my Ellen, think of my surprise,
To find our foe, Schedoni, was that villain.

ELLENA.

What said Vivaldi?---Was Schedoni he?
Horror of horrors! (*she stands in dumb amazement.*)

VIVALDI.

What means my better self?---speak plainly to me;
Destroy me not by this soul-dead'ning stupor.

ELLENA.

What hast thou done?--A murderer!--Schedoni!
Murder a wife!--a mother then!--and I--

(*Faints in his arms.*)

VIVALDI.

My senses stagger with this blow unknown.
Schedoni!--Can he be then?--'Tis impossible--

SCHEDONI enters, guarded.

SCHEDONI.

Nay, shed the blood that scarcely warms her heart;
Thy steel were merciful to those rash words,
That hellish hatred, levell'd at my life.

VIVALDI.

Yet tell me, tho' the sound should strike me dead;
(And sure, if thou be he, death were most welcome)
Speak, and prevent my question.

SCHEDONI.

Thy worst fears

Are realized--thy vengeance is complete.

Thy accusation sinks who came to save thee;

Tears from thee thy Ellena.—In one word,
I am her father.

VIVALDI.

The parent of my love! O fatal rashness!
Thus prostrate at your feet behold me, father:
In mercy take the life which has destroy'd you.
While yet death's counterfeit sits on her brow,
And veils the glance, that kills with its reproach,
Let me expire; nor ever view those beams,
That I have strangled in a sea of blood.

SCHEDONI.

No, live.—To die is rapture to the wretched.

My Ellena—soft, she revives.

ELLENA, (*coming slowly to herself, at last sees*

SCHEDONI bending over her, upon which, with
a sudden Recollection, she shrieks frantically)

My mother!

SCHEDONI.

I cannot bear this. Lead me to your cells;
Employ unheard-of engines to torment me:
Your iron whips, your fires, your breaking wheels,
Are Eden to the hell that burns within me.

[*Rushes out.*

ELLENA (*gazing wildly on VIVALDI.*)

Vivaldi! (*then to the Guard*)

Lead me to the dungeon of my father.

[*Exeunt severally,*

*The Chamber of secret Examination—The MONK
sitting in his Inquisitor's Garb.*

SCHEDONI brought in.

SCHEDONI.

Most holy Father, let me break through forms,

And, by confession of my crimes, dismiss
The frigid toil of slow and creeping proof.
I am a wretch for whom no hope remains
In being, and do therefore beg to die.

ANSALDO.

Does this despair proceed from conscience, son?
Or from unlook'd for proofs of your offences?

SCHEDONI.

From both. But deem not that I state it so
To shun, by sorrow for repented guilt,
One torture of my punishment. By heaven
I could as soon clasp Etna in his rage,
And think his flaming fountain were the soft
Descending shower that dewes the breast of earth,
As feel the misery that rages in me,
And hear of mercy.

ANSALDO.

Yet subdue despair!

It is rebellion to true penitence,
Which half obliterates recorded sin,
With gentle tears.

SCHEDONI.

I have been all my life
The slave of passion in its fierce excess.
I had a wife—had! for she lives not now,
Whom most injuriously I treated—She,
Of high indignant spirit, with disdain
Requited my neglect—till jealousy,
Of that which I contemn'd, seiz'd on my brain,
And made me vigilant o'er which I hated.
My jealousy soon singled out an object.
One day returning from a wiley absence,

I overhear'd what hurried me to frenzy.
 I hied me to a lattice, and beheld
 The traitor on his knees before my wife;
 Whether she rose, resenting his address,
 Or that she heard my step, I cannot say.
 I did not pause to question, but straight rush'd,
 To stab the villain who had wrong'd me—He
 Escap'd my vengeance—rage demanded prey—
 My wife receiv'd the poinard, and I fled.

ANSALDO.

O fatal rashness! well do I remember
 The occasion and the crime.

SCHEDONI.

How, you remember!

ANSALDO.

Yes! Count de Bruno! or memory must fail.
 I was the suitor of your beauteous wife.

SCHEDONI.

Say, was she innocent!

ANSALDO.

She was most innocent.

Stung with remorse, I hurried from the world
 And took the cowl—In the confessional
 Upon St. Marco's eve, some fourteen years since,
 Your sorrows in the silence of the night
 Breath'd through the grate, and waken'd all my own.

SCHEDONI.

Were you then that Ansaldo! Gracious powers!

ANSALDO.

Nothing more sure. I sought unknown your
 convent,

Became your friend, to frustrate your designs,
 And lure that fiend ambition from your breast,

Which still you nourish'd in the cloister's gloom.
 I am the Monk of Fort Paluzzi—He
 Who fought to snatch Vivaldi from your snare.
 What more I am, a gentler tongue shall tell.
 Come forth, Olivia.

*The Sister, named OLIVIA, at San Stephano,
 enters.*

(OLIVIA advances, and throws aside her Veil.)

SCHEDONI *(starting.)*

It is my wife, my murder'd innocent.
 Matilda, speak, art thou thus very she?
 Or does my guilty mind create the vision,
 To heighten my despair by vain illusion?

OLIVIA.

I am Matilda, more rejoic'd to view
 This change wrought in the heart, than I could be
 To clasp the wealthy honours of the world,
 And hear a nation style me sovereign.

VIVALDI and ELLENA are brought in—ELLENA
runs to the feet of OLIVIA.

ELLENA.

My dear preserver—Ah, that veil you gave me

SCHEDONI.

Didst thou bestow thy veil upon Ellena?

OLIVIA.

I did; what means?

SCHEDONI.

Woman, she is thy child. *(they fly into each others
 arms.)*

ANSALDO.

Such is my triumph o'er mistaken passion.

A transport greater than ev'n love can give!

Or rather, it is love sublim'd and purg'd
From all its sensual earthly properties.

Enter a Second FAMILIAR.

2d FAMILIAR.

Count Vivaldi, yonder is a fellow,
The most outrageous that I ever handled.
He swears and dances---says he'll eat his way
Through iron bolts and chains to reach his master.

VIVALDI.

Let him come to us---'tis my faithful Paullo.

PAULLO (*runs in.*)

PAULLO.

What's this? Did I hear truly? Is my master
safe? Free from the foul claws of these harpies?
I could dance---I could sing---I could laugh.
Forgive me; but I feel I must cry, or my heart
will burst.

VIVALDI.

But who are these---Paullo, see who come yonder?

CARLO *brings in* FIORESCA.

CARLO.

There is no need of flight---Behold him free.
" I have fed long enough on sighs and groans,
" Let me enjoy a little transport, will you?
" Think us not void of feeling, though our office
" It is to punish guilt. Believe me, friends,
" There is no ear that loves the voice of pain.
" And those tough sinews that apply the torture,
" Shake often at the work. Nor is his cheek,

"Who suffers, th' only one bedew'd with tears."
My fellows come to greet your glad acquittal.

SCHEDONI.

We thank them heartily. Be happy, children.
Matilda, join your benediction with me.
May it fall thick in blessedness upon you;
And let one throb of charitable pity
Soften the censure of your erring father.
Come, my Matilda. Our remains of life
Shall yet be sooth'd by harmony and peace.
Let all who hear me fling away ambition,
For O, I know the fury is remorseless,
The bonds of duty shrivel in her blaze,
And nature is the victim at her altar.

PAULLO (*to Fiorella*.)

Do you hear that my delicate anchovy? Fiorella,
girl, keep down ambition. I know what heart
those eyes aim at, but beware; and yet if it so
please my lord Vivaldi, I care not if they hit their
mark.

VIVALDI.

Take her, good Paullo, and my favour with her.

SCHEDONI.

Now go we on to Naples. There lives one
Who must partake our joy, and my regrets.
Then will we to the Convent of my love,
And praise the power who triumphs in the heart.

FINALE.

FINALE.

CHORUS.

SO shall we all from sorrow rest !
 So shall our future hours be blest !
 High heav'n to praise,
 Our voices raise ;
 And every mercy be confest !

PAULLO.

In chearful strains, Fioreſca, we
 Will ſpeak our thanks for liberty !

FIORESCA.

So ſhall our future transports prove,
 Heav'n pleas'd to cheriſh virtuous love !

Chorus repeated.

THE END.